GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:594
ANSWERED ON:21.11.2007
GLOBAL STUDY ON INDIAN RIVERS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Wildlife Fund has conducted global study in regard to Indian rivers and has expressed concern on the process of drying of these rivers;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the steps taken in this regard by the Government so far; and

(d) the success achieved by the Government as a result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) & (b) In a report entitled "World's top 10 rivers at risk", the World Wildlife Fund, an International Non-Government Organisation (NGO), has listed the river Ganga as one of the World's ten rivers facing risk. The Central Government is not aware of the data-base and the methodology adopted by the said NGO for making this Report. The report profiles the biodiversity of river Ganga, and perceives over extraction of water for agriculture and excessive water diversions affecting natural flows as major threats to the river. The Report does not consider other Indian rivers as facing danger of getting dried up.

(c) & (d) The flows of river Ganga are being monitored by Central Water Commission (CWC) under the Ministry of Water Resources at various places on regular basis.There is no apparent reduction in the available water in river Ganga at its terminal point at Farakka Barrage even during the critical season. The CWC has formulated a Plan for water resources development in the country that envisages inter-linking of rivers for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins for optimum utilization of water in the country. Under the National River Conservation Plan of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, various works are undertaken for pollution abatement in major rivers including Ganga through interception and diversion of sewage for its treatment and construction of Sewage Treatment Plants and Low Cost Sanitation. The National Environment Policy, 2006 also advocates an integrated approach for management of river basins by the concerned river authorities, ensuring maintenance of adequate flows, adherence to water quality standards throughout their course in all seasons and protection of land resources.